



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of

Takayoshi Sawayama.

Serial No.: 09/754,277

Filed: January 5, 2001

For: PLASMA ETCHING APPARATUS

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Group Art Unit: 1763

Examiner: L. Alejandro
Mulero

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ML

Honorable Commissioner of Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Date: February 10, 2003

Preliminary Amendment

Sir:

A Request for Continued Prosecution (RCE) being enclosed herewith, it is respectfully requested that the following amendments and remarks be considered upon initial examination of the above application.

In the Specification

(1.) At page 2, line 4, please replace the paragraph that begins "When the gas-introducing plate 4..." with the following paragraph:

When the gas-introducing plate 4 lying within the processing chamber of the etching apparatus is used up, the gas-introducing plate 4 becomes thin as shown in Fig. 2. Further, the gas holes 3 defined in the gas-introducing plate 4 reach a given size or more respectively, the following would occur. Plasma enters the backside (cooling plate side) of the gas-introducing plate from the etching-processing chamber 9 through the enlarged

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